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C O N F I D E N T I A L DUSHANBE 002094

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [ENRG](#) [TI](#) [RS](#) [AF](#)

SUBJECT: "WITHOUT THE US, ROGUN WILL NOT BE BUILT": TAJIK ENERGY MINISTER

REF: A) DUSHANBE 2013 B) DUSHANBE 1919

CLASSIFIED BY: Thomas Armbruster, Charge d Affaires, US Embassy Dushanbe, State.

REASON: 1.4 (b), (d)

1. (C) The United States and AES still have significant roles to play in Tajikistan's hydropower sector. Tajik Minister of Energy Jurabek Nurmamatov told PolOff rumors of RusAl dominating the Rogun project did not reflect the Ministry's position or the Tajik government's. RusAl had taken only a preliminary step by committing to a third of the project. He dismissed as unimportant a recent news report regarding a strictly Russian-Tajik commission to determine Rogun's cost and inventory, noting the State Committee for Management of State-owned property, and not the MoE, was behind the new body. "As far as we are concerned, without the United States, Rogun will never be built." MoE has more political clout than the State Committee.

2. (C) Rogun will be an international project, he emphasized, involving the World Bank, AES, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development and other international partners, to export electricity to Afghanistan and Pakistan. Nurmamatov regarded the January 12 meeting in Islamabad to draft a Memorandum of Understanding (reftel A) as the point to clarify RusAl and AES's roles in the project. Furthermore, he saw a role for AES in Sangtuda, likely in the construction of the high-voltage transmission lines.

3. (C) COMMENT: Nurmamatov's comments downplay recent rumors about Oleg Deripaska and RusAl's involvement in Rogun, and reinforce President Rahmonov's recent message to the Ambassador (reftel B) that the United States will be a key player. Whether the Tajiks are telling the Russians something different about Rogun remains an open question.

4. (C) COMMENT CONTINUED: Speaking cheerfully and frankly, Nurmamatov was all business and no small talk. He answered PolOff's questions directly and completely, but did not engage in wider discussions of energy or the economy. Embassy staff who have met with him previously say he is accessible and open, but always to the point. END COMMENT.

ARMBRUSTER

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